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ABSTRACT

Three successful school program models designed to help language minority students conserve the language skills acquired in their homes and continue normal native language development are described. The programs were developed to counteract a trend toward wasting valuable existing language skills and resources. The programs include: (1) an elementary level bilingual immersion program, implemented in four California public schools, in which both native English-speakers and native Spanish-speakers develop academic linguistic and metalinguistic skills in both languages; (2) a secondary level partial bilingual immersion program providing two tracks of formal Spanish instruction, intensive Spanish as a second language and Spanish for native speakers, in addition to traditional Spanish second language instruction; and (3) a program at the University of California at Los Angeles that permits registered Korean American students to enroll in an intensive Korean language program, involving sheltered language instruction in subject-area courses and overseas and off-campus language experiences. The university program is jointly sponsored with Seoul National University. While the programs differ in design, all three support the maintenance and development of linguistic minority students' home languages. (MSE)

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ABSTRACT

The premise for this paper is that valuable foreign language resources found in this country are currently being squandered; namely, the high levels of language proficiency, in a wide variety of languages, brought to our schools each year by representatives of linguistic minority populations. Unfortunately, there are few efforts to conserve and develop the language resources of these linguistic minority students who enter our schools with oral-aural language skills that are greater than the proficiency levels of most graduates of foreign language programs in this country. We present brief descriptions of three school programs at three different academic levels (elementary, secondary, university) that represent instructional models that provide linguistic minority children with opportunities to conserve the language skills acquired in their homes and communities and to continue normal language development toward the skills that are characteristic of mature, adult, literate, native speakers of their ancestral languages. In addition, we point out that the domains of language development in students from linguistic minority homes have not been adequately addressed in the second language acquisition research. Thus, little information is available about the process of language development in these students and the most appropriate instructional techniques. A research program that addresses these concerns is discussed with respect to each of the three instruction models.

Introduction

In an ecology-minded society such as ours the term conservation is readily understood. It suggests strategies to protect against the loss or diminution of endangered, highly valued resources. As the title suggests, this paper is about the conservation of extremely valuable language resources that are now being foolishly squandered; namely, the high levels of language proficiency, in a wide variety of languages, brought to our schools each year by representatives of linguistic minority populations.

For example, a five-year old Korean American student entering a public school kindergarten class in Los Angeles' Korea Town will have acquired, as have hundreds of other youngsters in this neighborhood, a very high level of oral-aural proficiency in the native language of his parents and grandparents; namely, Korean. If one were to collect and analyze samples of the child's performance in this language, he would find that he has mastered completely the phonological system of adult Korean speakers. He will have acquired nearly all of the morphological and syntactic rules necessary for sentence formation as well as those for the production and comprehension of conversational discourse. It would also be noted that he nearly always adheres to socio-linguistic rules determined by the relationship he has with his interlocutors; that is, there will be differences in his choice of lexicon, honorifics and even voice qualifiers and body-language depending upon his conversational partners. Like all

a 2 or 2+ on the U.S. Government Interagency Language Round Table Oral Proficiency Interview scale (Adams & Frith, 1979, cited in Lowe, 1982). This level of proficiency has been described, in part, as follows:

"Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements...can get the gist of most conversations on nontechnical subjects and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions; accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible; can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have a thorough or confident control of grammar (p.189)."

If a university student were to take Korean language courses five hours a week for 30 weeks each year for four years of her undergraduate career, she would have received only 600 hours of instruction and would be fortunate if her proficiency were rated in the 2/2+ range of proficiency. On the other hand, there is simply no doubt that our hypothetical five-year old would be rated, with the limitations suggested above, at the 3+/4 level on the same scale.

The obvious point of these extensive introductory remarks is to establish the dimensions of the resources represented in the competencies of linguistic minority children in our schools. Clearly what has been described for the hypothetical Korean American child is also true for countless numbers of children in other ethnolinguistic communities found in almost all urban

centers in the United States. These children have already acquired, without the expenditures of community resources, what would take foreign language students in our schools and colleges thousands of hours to acquire, if in fact we had the instructional technology that would allow them to do so, at huge financial costs to taxpayers.

The question now, and we already know the answer, is what does our society do to first conserve and then enhance these enormous national resources? We do very little. In fact, it is almost as if there were an unspoken national policy to do whatever is necessary to deny opportunities for the conservation of the competencies held by these linguistic minority students. Our policy is basically "subtractive" in nature: we seem to insist that linguistic minority children give up their ancestral languages as dues if they wish to become members of the generally monolingual English-speaking majority club. It is the position of this paper that this is a seriously misguided policy, one that is contrary to the best interests of linguistic minority children with regard to their general education and progress towards acquiring proficiency in English, and with regard to our national interest given the renewed attention to the enhancement of our foreign language resources.

Fortunately, there is some evidence of efforts underway to counteract these contradictory tendencies. In this paper we will present brief descriptions of three different school programs that represent instructional models that portend to reverse the

national trend; namely, programs that provide linguistic minority children with opportunities to conserve the language skills acquired in their homes and communities and to continue normal language development toward the skills that are characteristic of mature, adult, literate, native speakers of their ancestral languages.

Elementary Level Bilingual Immersion Education

One extremely promising experimental model of education that, among a host of other benefits, would permit substantial numbers of linguistic minority children to make normal progress toward the acquisition of a mature, educated level of proficiency in their home language, is bilingual immersion. Although this model is referred to by many names (e.g., language immersion, two-way immersion, two-way bilingual education), the most common names are two-way bilingual immersion or bilingual immersion. Despite the variety of names, the programs share a common definition:

... a program ... which employs two languages, one of which is English, for the purposes of instruction and involves students who are native speakers of each of those languages. Both groups of students--limited English proficient (LEP) and English proficient (EP)--are expected to become bilingual. They learn curricula through their own language and through the second language, become proficient in the second language, and continue to develop skills and

proficiency in their native language (New York State Education Department, 1986).

There are a number of goals for such a program over and beyond the conservation and development of the linguistic minority students' L1. These goals include high levels of scholastic achievement in both languages, earlier and more efficient acquisition of English language skills, high self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward both languages and the communities they represent (Lindholm, 1986). These outcomes, individually and collectively are probably of greater importance to the education and welfare of minority students than the language conservation issue being addressed in this paper. But, the added benefit of L1 conservation is an extremely precious by-product, one that is worthy of careful monitoring over the next few years to provide qualitative and quantitative information on the conditions that provide optimal language development opportunities for children in these programs.

The basic instructional design of the bilingual immersion program is, assuming English and Spanish as the two languages involved, as follows: first, in terms of student participants, there are roughly one third English and two thirds Spanish native speakers in each class. Second, in terms of language of instruction, Spanish is the primary language of instruction from kindergarten to second grade, but with some time--for example, 30 minutes a day in kindergarten and 60 minutes a day in first grade--dedicated to the development of English language

proficiency and language arts. In grades two to three, approximately 20% of the curriculum is taught in English and in grades four through six, 50% of the instruction is in English. The two languages are never mixed within an instructional period. Each language is used as the medium of instruction for the subject matter employing all of the verbal skills, both oral and written, normally associated with each content area. It is therefore necessary for the students to develop linguistic and metalinguistic skills in both languages that will enable them to read academic texts, write acceptable essays and test responses, and be able to discuss subject-matter areas--mathematics, science and social studies in both languages.

We are currently working with four California schools each of which began implementation of a Spanish/English bilingual immersion program in September, 1986. Our objective has been to help implement and to evaluate the bilingual immersion programs. Initially, we worked with the California State Department of Education's Bilingual Education Office to develop the instructional characteristics that would further define the bilingual immersion model. We looked to the literatures on bilingual education, foreign language immersion education, second language learning and teacher effectiveness for the instructional characteristics that underlie successful educational models. One important characteristic that emerged concerns the curriculum. Apparently, there must be integration of content and language instruction in the teaching of the core curriculum of

the school: Spanish and English language arts components need to be included and integrated with the content. A second significant characteristic concerns language input; it must be comprehensible to the L2 learners but also challenging for the L1 speakers. Third, cooperative learning techniques are utilized to integrate students from both groups, to provide opportunities for using language (especially L2) and to create tasks wherein each student has an equal status. Fourth, there is a positive and reciprocal teacher-student interactional climate that utilizes a two-way interactional mode of instruction, and positive expectations for and interactions with all students. Finally, a home/school component is necessary to involve parents in the education of their children.

Our evaluation model is an interaction model (Cortés, 1986) which assumes that program outcomes (academic achievement, language proficiency, psychosocial functioning) are the result of a complex interaction between societal factors (community background factors such as status of L1 and L2; and home background factors such as exposure to L2, parent educational background) and school factors (educational input characteristics such as purchase of Spanish materials, expectations for student success; instructional characteristics such as use of Spanish and English and integration of language and content; student characteristics such as language aptitude and motivation). The objective is not simply to determine program outcomes, but to understand what interactions of societal and school factors

influence particular program outcomes. Furthermore, second language learning paradigms involving transfer and metalinguistic strategies in different language proficiency contexts (e.g., contextualized vs. decontextualized) are also under investigation to better understand the processes underlying how the variables interact to produce particular program outcomes.

The characteristics of the bilingual immersion model are, of course, markedly different from most bilingual education programs designed for linguistic minority children which seldom provide for the development and maturation of adult-level linguistic competence in the children's L1. Bilingual immersion education also differs from the highly successful foreign language immersion programs, which have provided extraordinary opportunities for linguistic majority children to acquire foreign languages. Bilingual immersion education would appear to offer both linguistic minority and majority children excellent academic and language acquisition opportunities and, of relevance here, we see no brighter prospects for the conservation of the valuable language resources discussed earlier than those to be gained through participation in a bilingual immersion program.

Secondary Level Bilingual Partial Immersion Program

Another promising experimental model of education that would permit linguistic minority students the opportunity to develop a mature, educated level of proficiency in their home language is exemplified by the bilingual partial immersion program at Mount Miguel High School, Grossmont Union High School District in San

Diego, California. The bilingual partial immersion program was initiated six years ago and is open to any interested incoming ninth grader. Program participants are divided into two tracks: Intensive Spanish as a Second Language (ISSL) and Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS). The ISSL track, which involves more exposure to Spanish language use and instruction than is practiced in traditional Spanish foreign language courses since Spanish is used as the medium of instruction, demands a four-year commitment to Spanish (1 hour per day, 5 days per week) enabling students to obtain more exposure to Spanish, particularly communicative input. For students in the SNS track, Spanish is also the medium of instruction. Since SNS students enter the program with varying degrees of oral-aural fluency but few have had any formal education in Spanish, SNS classes are intended to provide an opportunity for the development of Spanish academic language and literacy skills. Thus, the two tracks of formal instruction in Spanish were designed to fulfill the differing needs for achieving Spanish academic proficiency in the two populations in this program. After the first year, ISSL and SNS students participate together in one content course taught in Spanish each semester. All of the content courses satisfy graduation requirements. The curriculum design can be illustrated as follows:

<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>
ISSL 1	ISSL 2	ISSL 3	ISSL 4
SNS 1	SNS 2	SNS 3	SNS 4
	P.E.	History	Government/ Anthropology

The third year history course and the fourth year government and anthropology courses are taught in alternating units of Spanish and English. P.E. is taught entirely in Spanish.

There are also traditional Spanish (hereafter SPANISH) foreign language courses taught at Mount Miguel, which focus on Spanish grammar and literacy largely using English as the medium of instruction.

We have been working with this Bilingual partial immersion program to help them examine the Spanish proficiency levels of SNS, ISSL and SPANISH students and to determine what factors are associated with high versus low Spanish proficient speakers in the program.

A total of 236 ninth- through twelfth-grade students participated in the first year of data collection. Of these, 59 were in the Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) track (year 1 = 17, year 2 = 24, year 3 = 11, year 4 = 7), 76 were in the Intensive Spanish as a Second Language (ISSL) track (year 1 = 34, year 2 = 25, year 3 = 12, year 4 = 5), and 101 were in the traditional Spanish track (year 1 = 53, year 2 = 30, year 3 = 15, year 4 = 3). Each student was administered the listening, reading and writing subtests of the Modern Language Association (MLA)

Cooperative Foreign Language Test and a background questionnaire. The MLA speaking test was not included because it is very expensive to administer and score. The background questionnaire consists of four sections that record students' Spanish language background and exposure to Spanish, attitudes toward Spanish, motivation for learning or maintaining Spanish, and self ratings of Spanish proficiency.

There are several characteristics which relate to the Spanish language experiences of the students in the different tracks that are important in reporting and interpreting the results. In looking at their primary language, 82% of the SNS, 4% of the ISSL and 5% of the SPANISH students spoke Spanish as their first language. When the current home language is looked at, 29% of the SNS spoke only Spanish, and 61% spoke both Spanish and English. Of the ISSL students, 3% used Spanish and 9% conversed in both Spanish and English in the home. In the SPANISH group, none spoke only Spanish and 10% used both Spanish and English in the home. In fact, only 11% of the SNS students used only English at home, 82% of the SPANISH and 85% of the ISSL students used only English. What these data show is that most (92%) of the SNS students, 12% of the ISSL and 10% of the SPANISH students came from homes in which Spanish was used. Outside of the home, 93% of the SNS, 81% of the ISSL and only 45% of the SPANISH students reported that they used Spanish. These self reported frequencies of Spanish use did not consider the amount of Spanish that was spoken at any particular time. Thus, SNS

students may have held extended conversations whereas the ISSL or SPANISH students may have referred to the use of salutations or short phrases or sentences. The important point, though, is that twice as many ISSL students reported at least attempts to speak Spanish as did the SPANISH students outside of the home.

The results show that at every level and with almost every subtest, the Mount Miguel students performed at or above what would be expected of them in listening, reading and writing in comparison with the appropriate MLA norming sample. In many cases, the ISSL and particularly the SNS groups scored much higher than the norming sample. In comparing the SNS, ISSL, and SPANISH groups, where such comparisons were possible, the SNS group consistently scored higher than the ISSL group which scored higher than the SPANISH group. However, in most cases, the difference between the ISSL and SPANISH groups was not statistically significant.

In constructing a profile of the highly proficient Spanish speaker in the Mount Miguel bilingual partial immersion program, several factors were evident. A proficient speaker was proficient in all three skills -- listening, reading and writing -- and could accurately assess his or her proficiency. In addition, the highly proficient speakers were exposed to and used more Spanish through interactions with others, watching Spanish TV programs, and reading Spanish literature.

Perhaps more importantly, though, this study is one of the few that has addressed the native language proficiency of

students who had previously received most, if not all, of their instruction in English and who wanted to develop their Spanish literacy skills. Thus, the results clearly show that the bilingual partial immersion program is meeting its goals in providing native speakers with academic language and literacy skills in Spanish.

These findings are important for the second language learning literature because of what they reveal about the Spanish proficiency levels of students who are educated in English. Most of the SPANISH, ISSL and SNS students who came from Spanish-speaking homes would be considered as native speakers of Spanish and second language learners of English. However, for most of these students, instruction has been through English to the exclusion of Spanish. Thus, in essence, they have more English than Spanish academic proficiency skills, especially decontextualized language skills. We would argue that these students need more investigative attention by second language learning researchers to determine how or whether they differ from other highly proficient Spanish speakers in their acquisition of high level Spanish competencies. More information is needed about their process of Spanish language development and how to best design instructional programs that build on their existing language skills. This issue is complicated by the lack of tests that can adequately measure the Spanish language skills that these students possess.

Partial bilingual immersion programs at the secondary level offer an extremely promising approach to conserve and build on the L1 proficiency skills of linguistic minority students while at the same time promoting high L2 proficiency skills for linguistic minority students. A partial bilingual immersion program is also an excellent model to conserve the specialized language skills of highly proficient speakers who graduate from elementary-level bilingual immersion and foreign language immersion programs.

University Level Language Conservation Program

Many American university campuses have high concentrations of students from diverse ethnolinguistic groups. UCLA may be especially blessed in this regard in that we have large populations of students from several of these groups. While, for reasons discussed earlier in this paper, not all students in these ethnolinguistic groups have had the opportunity to acquire, maintain or develop linguistic competencies in their ancestral languages, it is evident that a substantial number have at least measurable competencies in the languages of their forefathers. For many such students, these predominantly passive abilities constitute a resource that is valuable; one that might well serve as the basis on which to build toward high levels of productive skills at an advantageous rate and to a degree that might exceed those attained by more traditional approaches to language instruction.

Recently an experimental program was designed and implemented at UCLA to provide Korean American students who have demonstrable levels of competence in spoken Korean an opportunity to acquire adult levels of linguistic and literacy skills in Korean. This program permits registered Korean American students to enroll in an intensive Korean language program jointly sponsored by UCLA and Seoul National University (SNU) in Seoul, Korea. The first cohort of such students departed for Seoul in late March, 1987.

The curriculum for the intensive course designed to meet the linguistic and literacy skill objectives was developed in collaboration with SNU Korean language teachers and faculty at UCLA in the departments of East Asian Languages and Cultures and Applied Linguistics. The instructional program includes many of the content-based features described earlier in this paper. It includes 30 hours of classroom instruction per week for ten weeks at SNU in Seoul. At least half of these hours are courses in history, geography, literature and culture taught in a "sheltered" version of Korean (i.e., language that is made comprehensible by limiting the initial input and accompanying communicative attempts with actions, objects, gestures, expressions, pictures and circumlocutions). In addition to classroom instruction, there are a number of problem-solving activities off-campus which require use of Korean, as well as residence in Korean homes while in Korea.

To evaluate the efficacy of this program, data on each participant was collected. Pre-test data included Korean language proficiency, self-esteem, ethnolinguistic loyalties, as well as a host of other biographical data. The experiences of the students in and out of class will be carefully monitored by an applied linguistics researcher, student diaries will also be kept and analyzed and post-tests will be administered to ascertain gains in Korean language proficiency. It is assumed that these data will help to elucidate the contributions such a program will make toward developing the students' competence and confidence in using Korean for subsequent academic, social or professional purposes. Also, the data will be analyzed to examine the impact such an experience has on participants' views of themselves as representatives of this ethnolinguistic group and the impact that these attitudes have on their success as Korean language acquirers.

We are, of course, optimistic that as a result of the experience with this population, we will be able to demonstrate enormous strides toward the development of high-level language skills that are rarely attained in traditional university language courses. If we are proven correct, then one can confidently consider providing similar opportunities to Thai Americans, Polish Americans, and other ethnolinguistic groups.

Discussion

These three model programs differ in how they promote L1 conservation, but they do not differ in the importance that is

attached to maintaining and developing the home language of linguistic minority students. The significance of developing the first language in the early elementary grades is critical for many linguistic minority students to expedite their learning of English and to facilitate their academic achievement (Cárdenas, 1984; Cummins, 1979, 1981; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981; Troike, 1986). If we subscribe to these second language learning and bilingual education views, then L1 maintenance and development must be awarded a priority in the education of young linguistic minority children.

Our program of research with the elementary-level and secondary-level bilingual immersion programs follows a structural interaction model that attempts to look at the factors that lead to high versus low academic achievement and language proficiency. But, more importantly, we want to understand how student factors interact with instructional factors to facilitate students' development of their home languages. Furthermore, at the secondary level, we know very little about how to best integrate the results of first and second language learning research to inform us about how best to encourage the development of L1 academic proficiency of linguistic minority students in our schools.

One important factor to consider at the secondary and tertiary levels is that many of the students in the programs cannot necessarily be classified as proficient speakers of their home language. While they are native speakers at varying levels,

they have not advanced in their native language as they have in English. Many are much more fluent at an academic level in English than they are in their ancestral language. Second language learning researchers need to be aware of this population as one worthy of study. How does this population differ from the English monolingual population? How do their stages of development differ from those of English monolinguals beginning the study of a foreign language, or from English speakers who have had a couple of years of formal instruction? These are issues that have not been adequately dealt with in the second language learning literature.

In conclusion, we have described three programs at three different academic levels that are designed, in part, to support the conservation and development of linguistic minority students' home languages. These programs are in their infancy. As we learn more about the critical factors in developing high-level literacy skills in linguistic minority students' ancestral languages, these programs will be modified and replicated. We strongly believe that priority should be given to research that will teach us how we can most efficiently conserve the highly valuable language resources possessed by thousands of young people who could make major contributions toward resolution of our national foreign language resource deficits.

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